



Brian Christian

Business Enterprise Program

Brian Christian is an Indianapolis native. After high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm aboard the U.S.S. Saratoga. After his service, he returned to Indiana, met his wife, and started a family. Brian then began working with a national engineering firm and ran a survey crew.

In 2007, at the age of 35, Brian began having difficulty with his vision and had a routine eye exam. The exam resulted in a diagnosis of Leber's Hereditary Optic Neuropathy (LHON). LHON is an incurable disease resulting in blindness. Blindness occurs because

the mitochondrial DNA attacks the optic nerves in the eyes causing a loss of central vision. By the time Brian received an official diagnosis, he had significant vision loss in both eyes.

After working with VR to prepare for his employment outcome, he completed training to become a licensed vendor for the Business Enterprise Program (BEP). The BEP is a program authorized under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, and enables state VR agencies to recruit, train, license, and place individuals who are blind, as operators of vending facilities located on federal and state properties. In addition to receiving assistance from VR to become a licensed vendor, VR also provided Brian with computer training and equipment, and orientation and mobility training to help him learn to safely navigate his surroundings and maintain his independence with daily living skills. Brian now owns his own vending business with the Pendleton Correctional Industrial Facility.